



R. Bullock (A)

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TESTIMONY

AGAINST

The 66 Judges call'd Quakers, who writ an Epistle (as they call it) against John Story and John Wilkinson, and those that joyned with them, subscrib'd by the said 66 Judges, which is here inserted ; with an Answer thereunto subscribed by 67 of the said People; published to this end, that all may take notice how the Spirit of Antichrist hath entred into the Quakers Teachers in this our Age and Generation.

LET all People take notice to whom this Writing shall come, That there is a Generation of Antichristian Preachers called *Quakers*, in this Land of *England*, who make it their great business yearly to meet together at *London*; and when as they are met together, for to call into question such things as they have nothing to do withal, that is, such things as are of a Spiritual Concernment; the which thing alone, belongeth to the Light or Measure of the Spirit in every ones own particular to judge of, and it doth not belong to the Light in others, for to judge others in matters of Conscience, Religion, and Worship, who owns the same Light or Measure of Divine Life to be the only Rule for them to walk by; but the place of all such Teachers is to judge themselves and not their Brethren, as Christ said, *Judge your selves and ye shall not be judged*. But now, if these men did but own themselves to be brethren, or in a Child's State, or in a Servant's Place to God, as Christ did, who took upon him the form of a Servant, and also he learned Obedience to his Father as a Son; or if these men did but consider how Christ behaved himself as a Servant among his Disciples, although he was

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Lord of all, and also how he taught them, that those among them that did desire to be greatest, should be willing to become least, and so a Servant to others.

Then would they not have acted, as they have formerly done towards their Brethren in the *West and North of England*, and elsewhere, in setting themselves up as Judges over their Brethren in matters of Conscience, Religion, and Worship towards God; but they would rather have recommended every one to abide in their own measures, and so to have left all as had been convinced to God the Judge of all, who at the first did convince them, and not to have set up themselves as Judges over their Brothers Consciences, as the Sixty Six Judges have lately done in the year one thousand six hundred seventy seven, in their Paper sent to the *Quakers* in the *West of England*, the which Paper was written against *John Story* and *John Wilkinson*, and those which did joyn with them; wherein they did judge them to be of a rending, separating and dividing Spirit. But one main thing that the 66 Judges have neglected in that Paper sent to the *Quakers*, that is, they should have drawn up first a Bill of Indictment of the particular Criminal Facts that these *Quakers* had been guilty of before that they had passed or given forth such a sensorious general Judgment against them, the which thing you Judges neglected. But so far as I can understand, that the Criminal Facts, which these *Quakers* are charged to be guilty of, was, that these *Quakers* in the *West and North of England*, they did not receive and embrace the orders of *George Fox*, and also they refused to be tryed by those who did own the said Orders, Decrees and Impositions of *George Fox*, and the rest of those Preachers who had formerly made it their business to meet together in Council, and to send forth Orders and Decrees among the *Quakers*, as Rules for them to observe and walk after; which thing was practiced above ten years ago by those who were called the *Eleven Elders*: for They also sent forth a Paper of Orders among the *Quakers*; but by many of the *Quakers* the said Paper was disowned, although those which sent it forth among the *Quakers*, said, that it was given forth in and from the Operation of the Spirit of God; but surely those *Quakers* which did disown the said Paper, they did not believe what those called the *Eleven Elders* had asserted: For had they believed that the said Writing had been given forth in and from the Operation of the true Spirit, they dared not to have opposed it, nor yet to have disowned it; but their disowning of it doth give forth a certain Testimony, that those *Quakers* believed that it came from a wrong Spirit; for the *Eleven Elders* they did not stand to maintain it,

it, nor yet to give forth a Testimony against those *Quakers* which did disown the said Writing, which they ought to have done if it had been given forth from a right Spirit.

And now here followeth the Copy of the Writing sent by the 66 *Judges*, to the *Quakers* in the *West of England*, and also their Names to it; and likewise the *Quakers* Answer to it: and so let the Light, or true Spirit, or Gods Witness, judge in all those who shall read the said Writing, whether that which was given forth by the 66 *Judges*, did not come forth from the spirit of Antichrist, or from Satan in them transformed into an *Angel of Light*. Let the Light in all that shall read them judge.

Jeffery Bullocke

*From a MEETING held at Ellis Hook's Chamber
in London, the 12th. of the 4th. Month, 77.*

Our dear Friends and Brethren,

THE Lord who is the Ancient of Days, the Unchangeable, and the Holy One of *Israel*, that was and is to come, our Rock and Strength for ever, hath graciously brought us together by his own Power, and is with us, and hath covered us with his Love and Spirit, and filled our Hearts with his undeclarable Kindness; the sense of his Mercies hath exceedingly overcome us, and cemented us together; and blessed, sweet, and very precious to our Souls is the Heavenly Unity of Life amongst us, wherein at this Meeting, the Lord our God hath crowned us with Glory, Dominion, and Peace; blessed for ever be his pure Name.

Oh how good it is for all to keep in the Living sense of God and his Truth! where plentiful Redemption, and Preservation is known, where the Murmurer and Repiner can never come; therefore all that are in the muttering, dissatisfied, and jealous Nature, full of Doubts and Reasonings and Objections, go from their pure Eye, and out of Truth's Habitation in themselves, and so come to suffer loss.

O Dear Brethren at this time (as on like occasions hath been frequent with us) the care of the Peace, and the welfare of the Churches of Christ came upon us, and blessed be the Lord, things are generally well and flourishing, and Truth grows famous, though Sufferings abound in many places; yet it is well with Friends, and the Lords power reigns, and great hath been the Concern of Friends about the Sufferings of our Brethren, and other things, and blessed Meetings have we had,

wherein things have been clearly opened, sweetly and tenderly treated on in much love, and brotherly love concluded: For which, blessed be the Name of the Lord, whose Loving, Ancient, and Fresh Power and presence was with us.

But truly with bowed Spirits, and grieved Hearts, have we perceived the obstinate and obdurateness of some that have gone into the Self-will, despising Heavenly Dignities, and casting tender Love and Intreaties behind their backs, setting up, and continuing in, and promoting false and pernicious Jealousies, Mutterings, and secret Smitings; whereby they are darkened in their Understandings, and so have, through the Power of the Enemy of the King of Righteousness and Peace, set up a kind of Standard of Separation from that blessed Fellowship and Communion of the Churches of Christ sweetly possessed together, to the Dishonour of God, his Truth and People. More especially *John Wilkinson* and *John Story*, notwithstanding the many Visitations and Admonitions of Love, and Life, even in the deepest Travails; and that from time to time, and year to year; particularly the sense and admonition of the last yearly Meeting, writ in great love that they might return, and be reconciled to their Brethren, before they offer their Gifts, which they have rejected: And so far as it appears to us, that they will not come to us, nor near us in the peaceable Truth, which we have frequently and truly desired for their good; but that they go on in their opposition and evil smiting against the Faithful Brethren, and Practice of the Church of Christ, refusing to dissolve their separate Company in the *North*, or clear their Hands of them by a faithful Testimony against them, or so much as blot their Names out of their Paper of Separation.

And because we are sensible they have made an ill use of our Forbearance, even to the strengthening themselves in their Separation, and cover their evil Designs among some simple-hearted Friends, persevering therein by Word, Writing, and Practice, we are constrained after this continual waiting and exhortation (thus slighted by them for the Glory of the Name of the Lord, and sake of the Peace of the Churches of Christ, that we may stand clear in the Power of God, of the Blood of all in the great and notable day of Account) more publicly to reprove and judge them: And we do hereby reprove and judge that jealous, rending and separating Spirit, and them and their separate Company as being in the Spirit of Separation; and that by the Spirit and Power of our God, we warn all to whom this comes, to beware of the said *John Wilkinson* and *John Story*, whose way at present is not the way of Peace and Christian Concord: For if it were, they would
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not offer their Gift till reconciled to their Brethren. And therefore Brethren stand up in the Power and Wisdom of God for the Testimony of Truth against that wrong, murmuring, and dividing Spirit, and where they come, warn them to go home in the name of the Lord; and be reconciled to their Brethren, and not go thus up and down to offer their Gift, which in this State is not a Peace, but a Division, offering contrary to the Precept of Christ Jesus our Lord, first being reconciled, whatever their pretences be, and therein will you acquit your selves in Gods sight, and shew true Love and Friendship unto them, and those that may be hurt by them, which our Souls most earnestly desire; ye, that it may be truly well with them both here and for ever: And from the Lord we say, had they loved the Prosperity of *Zion*, and the Peace of *Jerusalem*, more than their own Self-will, and Self-separation; and had they sought the Unity that is in the Truth and sweet Communion of Brethren which stands in that Love that thinks no evil, and that Wisdom that is gentle and very easie to be intreated with the Brethren, sweet and precious had been our Fellowship to this day.

And it is our Godly Exhortation to you Friends and Brethren of Monthly and quarterly Meetings, that you watch in the Light and Power of God against this separating Spirit that smites at the blessed Fellowship of the Churches of Christ, and where it enters any, in Gods love to admonish, exhort, and warn such to take heed of that ravenous Spirit, and to keep the Unity of the Peace of the Family of the Lord, the Household of Christ which we are; and if notwithstanding your Christian Dealing and Forbearance, such persons persevere and go on in their separate Spirit and Practice, let Gods Truth be clear of them, and Truth set over their Heads, according to that blessed Order of the Gospel of Christ settled amongst you. And dear Brethren, be careful not to suffer your Meetings, which were gathered, not by the will of Man, but by the Power and Wisdom of the Lord God, to be disturbed, over-ruled, and spoiled by heady, obstinate, and contentious Persons, that disturb the Peace of the Church of Christ; neither fear Man, but eye the Lord, and wait in his Wisdom and Power to be guided and ordered; and so go on to your work in the name of the Lord: For the Seed of Life, and not the Wisdom which is from below, must rule and have the Dominion for ever.

But forasmuch as the way of the working of the subtil Enemy hath been to suggest, that it is the design of some to make themselves Lords over Gods Heritage, and to set up an Arbitrary Power in the Churches of Christ, and then to run out into severe Exclamations against Impositions,

sitions, crying up Liberty of Conscience, thereby casting a mist before the Eyes of the simple, and a Stumbling-block in the way of the weak. Thus we feel our selves constrained in the love of our Lord for the good of all to declare, and the Lord that gathered us, and preserved us to this day is our Record, that we deny and abhor any such thing; for we have one Lod, Judge and Law-giver, and that is Christ Jesus, unto whose Light, Power, and Spirit, we have been turned, and in that have worshipped him, and had Fellowship together to this day, and are your Servants for his sake; and we are assured in the Lord, that those that keep in the Light, Life, and Power of Christ, will have Fellowship with us, and truly our Fellowship is with the Father and the Son; and though it is far from us to bruise or hurt the poorest or least member in the Church of Christ, who may not have that clearness of sight, and strength of Faith, which the Lord hath brought us to, but that they may be cherished; yet by that Salt, that we have in our selves from the Lord, we are enabled to savour between the Transformations of the Enemy, and the scruples of the Innocent, and as to be tender of the one, so to give Judgment against the other; and our day hath lamentably shewn us the effect of that Spirit, that under a pretence of crying down Impositions, and pleading for Liberty, and doing nothing but what it is free to, endeavouring to lay waste the blessed Unity of the Brethren, and so over-run the blessed Heritage of the Lord, that lived together in an orderly Family under the law of life, and living order of the Gospel, with a loose and unsubjected Conversation, which would bring confusion to the Church, and make us a Derision to the Heathen.

And to the end that these very persons concerned in this separation, may appear to be no lovers of Christian liberty, and Gospel Privileges, as they pretend, let their own Paper, which is a Declaration of the Reasons of their so separating, be read and weighed in the Universal love and life of Christ Jesus, and therein we well suppose, will be found the true Nature of Imposition, in that none of their own County are allowed to be of their monthly and quarterly Meetings, but such as are appointed and chosen by the particular Meetings; next, that none of other Counties, though publick labourers of the Gospel, are to be admitted to be at their Meetings, unless it be to tell their Message, and immediately to depart; and these, with such like things, 87 subscribed, as the reasons of their separation, and Foundation of a new Government amongst themselves, which is a plain Independancy from the Practice of the Church of Christ throughout the World. O Friends, watch in the Power of God against this Spirit, that would
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make them twain, that God hath made one, and separate that which God hath joyned together; and you that have an Interest in them, and to whom their regard is. Oh have a care that you give them no strength in their manifest separation, but stand upon your Watch-tower. Dear Friends, in Gods love, touch not with that Spirit, the Enemy of Zions Glory, and their Peace; give not your strength to them, but deal faithfully with them, and seek them in Gods Way and Wisdom, that whatsoever becomes of them in the end, you may be clear of their Blood in the sight of the Lord; and that they may not say, but that they have had a day of love and visitation: and truly that which hath encouraged us in this Epistle, is, that good success God hath blessed our like Endeavours in his Power with: For many deceived by them, having seen their snare in tenderness of Spirit, have honestly confes'd their Fault, and are come from them, and have testified both against the separate company, and themselves for being of it; and now live in Unity with their Brethren, and feel the Joy and quiet Habitation, that in the Communion of Saints, and Fellowship of Jesus is enjoyed, Praises to the Lord for ever; and as we desire, so we hope more will be brought to the same blessed sence: so be zealous for the Lord dear Brethren, and stand up in his spirit and power, for the Peace of his Church; in his Precious peaceable life dwell, that keeps in soundness of mind, then will you shew mercy to that to which mercy is due, and Judgment to whom Judgment is due, without respect of Persons; and herein our pure true love is cleared to them and all mankind; and the God of Heavenly love, pure and precious, continue our Fellowship, and be with us all, and bless us to the Glory of his Eternal love, who over all Spirits, Angels, and Men, Thrones, Dignities, and Dominions, Reigns, and is worthy and blessed for ever. We are universally,

Your Dear and Faithful Brethren in the Labour, Travail, Tribulation, Patience, Hope, and Rejoycing of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thomas Taylor.
Tho. Briggs.
W. Edmonson.
Amb. Rigg.
Jas. Batt.
Jam. Harrison.
Cut. Hayhurst.

Jo. Burngeat.
Bra. Dayley.
Ste. Smith.
Tho. Holmes.
Ja. Halladay.
Tho. Robeison.
W. Gosnel.

Ben. Antrobus.
Sam. Jennings.
Rich. Pindle.
Francis Bell.
Ja. Fletcher.
Tho. Sacre.
Tho. Bracy.

<i>Jo. Tiger.</i>	<i>Luke Howard.</i>	<i>Nic. Gates.</i>
<i>Tho. Burr.</i>	<i>Rich. Smead.</i>	<i>Len. Fell.</i>
<i>W. Fallowfield.</i>	<i>Jo. Wilford.</i>	<i>Jo. Moone.</i>
<i>Jo. Johnson.</i>	<i>Jo. Elson.</i>	<i>Jo. Abraham.</i>
<i>Hen. Jackson.</i>	<i>Sam. Cater.</i>	<i>Jo. Higgons.</i>
<i>Gy. Bernardiston.</i>	<i>Jo. Vaughton.</i>	<i>Tho. Latemore.</i>
<i>Tho. Atkins.</i>	<i>Jo. Watson.</i>	<i>Jo. Hill.</i>
<i>Mor. Watkins.</i>	<i>Fr. Fincher.</i>	<i>Ant. Tomkins.</i>
<i>W. Gibson.</i>	<i>Jo. Kilborne.</i>	<i>Jo. Boy.</i>
<i>Ric. Longworth.</i>	<i>W. Whaley.</i>	<i>Chr. Marshall.</i>
<i>Jo. Bowren.</i>	<i>Tho. Ellwood.</i>	<i>Jo. Blackley.</i>
<i>Chr. Bacon.</i>	<i>Sam. Hulbooke.</i>	<i>W. Penn.</i>
<i>Ri. Vickris.</i>	<i>Chris. Taylor.</i>	<i>Fran. Moore.</i>
<i>Ja. Claypoole.</i>	<i>Rich. Davis.</i>	<i>Jo. Swinten, Jun.</i>
<i>Ol. Sampson.</i>	<i>Jo. Whitehead.</i>	<i>Eze. Wolley.</i>

P O S T S C R I P T.

ANd there were several Brethren that had left this City before this Meeting, wherein this Epistle was subscribed, who at other Meetings had testified against this separate Spirit in the Power of the Lord, and so are one with us herein; and some there were, who have already cleared their Consciences at their last years Meeting; and since at other Meetings, both by Epistles and other Manuscripts, in a full and faithful Testimony against this Spirit of Separation and opposition, and those that remain in it, and stands witnesses against it and them, for the Lord and his Heavenly Truth.

Let this be read in Monthly, Quarterly, and other mens Meetings, as in God's Wisdom and Counsel may be seen meet, and a Service for the same.

We whose Names are hereunto subscribed, being a part of the Lords People; a few lines from some of us call'd *Quakers* in the County of *Wilt*, and is in answer to a Paper bearing date from *Ellis Hook's* Chamber in *London*, the 12. day of the 4. Month, 1677. subscribed by 66 Persons, whose language seem to us, as though they did not write only on their own behalf, but as persons assuming Authority over the People of the Lord call'd *Quakers*.

And therefore are we now concerned in Conscience to give this Testimony, viz. that it becomes not them, nor yet any person upon Earth, to assume a Power, and thereby to appear as Lords and Masters over any

any one member of Christs Body; and in as much as we have such a fence that there is such a Spirit this day at work, we cannot but say, that (through the serious consideration of these things) the spirit of the Lord God is grieved in us, and though the Foundation of God stands sure unto us, who have not only believed, but also kept our integrity unto the Lord, even unto this present day, of which we have an absolute certainty confirmed unto us, by the evidence of Gods Spirit witnessing with our spirits herein; yet the extent of such proceedings may be of such an ill tendency, as some thereby may be weakened, and others possibly turned out of the way: Moreover when we consider what unchristian-like Carriages, and unbrother-like proceedings hath been exercised against our ancient Friends and Elders in the Truth, those faithful and innocent servants of the Living God *Jo. Wilkinson* and *Jo. Story*, we cannot but even lament, because the testimony of God on their behalf lives with us, and remains as an obligation upon our spirits thus to say, that though the principle of Truth in our Hearts, leads us not to place our Faith in them, or any other man or men whatsoever; because ever since the beginning of our Convincement of the truth to this day, we had a certain fence that all are liable to err, if they watch not; yet we have, and still do firmly believe, that it hath pleased our Heavenly Father to commit unto them a dispensation of the Gospel of Life and Salvation, with which they were by him two or three and twenty years since sent amongst us, who in that, with many of their dear Brethren now deceased, bore the Burthen in the heat of the Day, and as we firmly believe, have continued faithful Labourers in their Masters work and service to this very day, and through the Wisdom of God committed unto them; we well remember a word of reproof and instruction from them hath been a word of comfort, it being given in great care and tenderness for the preservation of that part of the Flock of God now accompanied with many exercises, who were gathered by them as Instruments in the hand of the Lord; and now through the length of time, our experimental knowledge concerning them, and their righteous walking before us from time to time, hath so confirmed us, that we freely give it as our belief and judgment, that they have not hitherto changed their way.

Therefore, you who have concerned your selves to write against them, to give over such work for time to come, and mind that which belongs to you, and let them alone to their Lord and Master, the true and living God, whose true Messengers they have been, and now are; For be it known unto you all, that you shall never be able to destroy
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that Interest God hath given these his Servants in the hearts of his people, while they keep the station where they now stand; for being wise in the wisdom that is from above, they have been Instruments in the Lords Hands to turn many to Righteousness, who with them, if they continue therein, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.

We confess your Paper is filled with many high expressions, viz. of Heavenly Unity, and crowned with Glory and Dominion, using the word Dignity, &c. which puts us in mind thus to query of you (since you, as we take it, so boast) what is the honour and advancement that you are lately arrived at? Have you any thing but what you have received? How can you expect we can believe such things are truly found amongst you, as in words you do so largely make a profession of, while we see and behold the spirit of prejudice flow from you, even in the very same Paper, against faithful Brethren who harms you not, neither have, or do we understand, that they seek Revenge, or render evil for evil, but leaves their Cause unto the Lord recommending the same unto the faithful and true witness of God in all Consciences, knowing that all Gods people are to act and speak as God thereby shall open their Understandings.

We cannot positively charge every one of you, that you have acted on the credit of others, but yet we are in our very Consciences satisfied, that several of you have so done, and so understand not what you have done; but yet remember this from your Friends, that whosoever hath so done to the wrong of the Lords Servants, it will redound to their own shame, and no imaginary power or authority: whatsoever will be able to uphold the betrayed or betrayers from the just Judgment in the day of the Lord. We take notice you thus say, notwithstanding the many Visitations and Admonitions, and that from time to time, and from year to year, &c. we desire that every one of you will now look back and behold your work, and consider whether great part of you, did ever in all your lives, either visit or admonish the said *Jo. Wilkinson*, and *Jo. Story* upon that account. We also find in the said Paper these expressions, Whereas, they meaning *J. S.* and *J. W.* concerning their evil Designs amongst the simple, persevering therein, many being deceived by them, setting up, and continuing in, and promoting false and pernicious Jealousies, a ravenous Spirit, and such like; and we do hereby reprove and judge (say you) that rending Spirit, and them and their seporate company: here you have not only charged in general terms, but also past Judgment upon your general Charge, notwithstanding which, the particular matter of Fact

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Fact as evidence of the charge lieth yet behind, which we in regard to the Law of Love and Christian Charity, do on the behalf of our suffering and innocent Brethren, expect that you make good, and in order to our satisfaction, whose Consciences are concerned (on the behalf of the truth) do query of you, what is the evil designed by them? And where hath it been made appear? And how do they persevere therein? Who are the many deceived by them? and what have they deceived them of? What hath been set up by them, and what do they continue in and promote that's false? What ravenous actions have been committed by them? As to your general Charge, we cannot but turn them upon your own heads as false, there to remain, until you prove them by particular matter of Fact.

We know it is become a custome with some to revile innocent men, but yet we also know it is an ill way to exalt one Brother by the defamation of another that is innocent: Our desires are, that this sin may not be laid to any of your charges, but rather, if you are conscious to your selves of guilt herein, you may speedily repent. You also thus say, we warn all to whom this comes, to beware of the said *J. S.* and *J. W.* and not only so, but seems to prescribe a form of words, viz. where they come, warn them to go home, and by their so doing, they will acquit themselves in Gods light; (mark) an easie way to be acquitted: We demand from whom have you power to give forth such a large Commiſſion, since we certainly know, that a man may speak your prescribed Form of words, like a Child that learns a Lesson by rote, and yet be far from standing acquitted in Gods light. Alas Friends! we have a godly Jealousie, that some imaginary whimsie hath led you to appear so confident, as to warn them to go home, because we believe the word of the Lord dwells richly in them; but perhaps you may think the stress of all lies in silencing them, or sending them home; if you so think, you deceive your selves, for we testify, that the same word of life which dwells in them, (and that cannot assent that the Servants of *Israels* God should bow to any Image, or Image-maker) dwells in many Brethren, Praises to the Lord for ever.

It appears by your words, you are afraid of being a derision to the Heathen, do you not take the ready way, and walk directly in the path that leads thither? And can you think otherwise? but if the Heathen knew but your unchristian-like carriages and proceedings against the Brethren, they would certainly have you in derision.

Now as touching the separate Meeting in the *North*, unto whose Paper (which is a Declaration of the reasons of their so seperating) you refer us, desiring us both to read it, and to weigh it, and then, say

you, we well suppose then will be found the true nature of Imposition: We tell you, we have both read it, and weighed it, and do not only well suppose, but also certainly find a great deal more in it than we find from you: For though some passages therein might have been worded to answer the intent of the subscribers better than the words laid down doth; yet Charity would so construe of the Reason, Equity, Truth and Justice offered by them therein, as not to put such constructions thereon, as never was their meaning. But what if we in this County, or any Friends elsewhere, should say to any of you at *London* or other Cities or Counties, as to the publick concern in the management of our affairs, meddle not with us unless concerned; but if the word of the Lord is really with any of you, we are ready to hear it: If we should so say unto you, we cannot think barely of this saying of yours, you may well suppose this to be the true nature of Imposition, neither do we understand theirs to be any otherwise, and no part of the nature of Imposition in it, having no penalty annexed thereunto.

And now we might by way of question, ask when and from whom you received power over them, or any other, and over what part your power doth extend? Seeing we certainly know Conscience ought to be free, with which you are not to intermeddle, and as for our outward Property, it belongs not to you, neither in it are we by you defended, and as to matter of Fact, you prove nothing against them. These things considered, we cannot understand, why or wherefore you should use such language as we find in your Paper: To us it seems rather to spring from the spirit of Lordship exercised amongst the Gentiles, then from that Spirit that delighteth to be Servant to the Brethren for Christs sake; and whereas you say, because we are sensible they have made an ill use of our forbearance to the strengthening themselves, and so forth, we do hereby reprove and judge them and others, &c. If you pretend not to a power over them, what need the word Forbearance? And if you pretend not to be their Judge, why do you undertake to pass judgment? But so far as we certainly know you have no power over them, neither spiritual nor temporal; we therefore tell you, you are Intruders, and your Paper of false judgment, on this account we do undervalue as, too mean and too light, either to affright or take place with us, that are established in the Truth, and the weightiest expression therein contained, is no more to us, than the flying of Thunder over our Heads; for in it we feel no weight at all, and the Lord assisting of us, do resolve not to walk by the light of your sparks, nor see with your Eyes, neither

neither favour with your Salt in these your proceedings, but to our Lord and Master will we either stand or fall.

And we further declare unto you, and give it as our belief and judgment (whatever you think, or however you may create a peace unto your selves in these things) that the more you stir, and the more you strive after this manner, the more will be the increase of your weight and burthen.

Therefore our Advice and Counsel to you is, that you labour to be still and quiet, and pursue peace as much as in you lies, and lay not that upon others which properly belongs unto your selves; but that which is your portion be content to take home to your selves: For you are the people you speak of, that occasions the mist to be cast before the eyes of the simple, and a Stumbling block in the way of the weak, and you are the Troublers of *Israel* this day; and although we truly desire peace, and a cessation to these things, and could be heartily glad if you would insist on them no farther, yet forasmuch as it appears to us, that this is the way or path, you, or at least some of you intend to walk, and delight to trade in: we do therefore advise you to look to your selves, and mark well your steps; for although we have hitherto for the most part born many things not pleasant to us, and that many times for the sake of others; yet having had continual provocations, and now you thus publicly appearing through the Nation, as by the directions of your Paper doth appear, we are in the Spirit and Power of our God stirred up to appear, as becomes Christians, in defence of the cause of Truth, wherein we look only and alone unto the Lord, and not unto man, with that eye that is open in us, that sees and beholds your out-goings in those things that tend to strife and debate contrary to the truth which we have received, and the Lord enabling, shall therein well observe you, and as occasion offers, our Faith is, that we shall always be ready (according as the Spirit of Truth shall lead us) to detest fictitious proceedings, as you have been exercised in, and therefore for time to come to be more careful of what you undertake, and see that according to the Truth, Right, Reason, Equity and Justice, you are able both to stand by and defend it, otherwise it will return back upon your own Heads with shame as this hath done, and no doubt it will yet farther do.

And we have yet farther to declare unto you concerning our selves, such is our present state and condition, that notwithstanding these things, we can this day to our comfort boldly say, we are what we are by the grace of God, and in that Grace we are daily waiting to be

be made more in his time, and in his time to be content, desiring nothing more than the encrease of that Grace and that therein we may continue to the end, walking before the Lord in all honest and godly Conversation, according to the present manifestation of his good Spirit given to us, and our Faith and Trust in the Lord is, that through his strength and power we shall be preserved thus to continue to the end of our days, and not to take up, or enter into the practice of any thing, though under never so fair, nor high pretence; but as by faith in this power, we come to feel the Lord leading us thereinto, and expecting it at our hands as a duty incumbent upon us, enjoyed by God alone, in which as we feel our Service, our Faith is, that as we have been, so we shall be ready to every good work, and act a deed of Charity amongst us, either to our Friends, or any other whom Christian Charity obligeth us to serve, wherein we may be serviceable, and for the keeping all in good order amongst those who profess the Truth; and here is neither *Paul* nor yet *Apolla*, but that *Christ* that was Crucified, comes here to be both Lord and King, Judge and Law-giver; and another Government than this inwardly received by us, and ought to be received by all, in order to the great Salvation, our Faith is, that the Lord will never lead his people into: And if you, or any of you would know what we are, (or are dissatisfied concerning us) be it known unto you all, this is the Government which we only and alone stand for, and stand to, and although we do confess, that some practices used amongst us, as outward Discipline in the Church of Christ, for the keeping things in good order, may be of Service being used in their places, as Gods people in Wisdom see meet, and occasion thereof, and not otherwise; yet if any Member or Members of the Church of Christ, have, or shall give any Paper of Instructions or Advice relating to outward forms of Discipline in the Church to the rest of their Fellow-members, we testify that the same ought to be recommended to the Conscience, that so when God's witness therein doth answer, that might be the only bond to put such advice and instructions in practice.

But if instead of this, any one or more, who have been Members of the Church of Christ have, or shall assume such a power to themselves, as to judge other members of the said Church to be departed from the truth, because they practice not such Council or Instructions, though they see it not from the evidence of God's Spirit in themselves to be their Duty, this we say is not according to the Truth, as practised, received and owned amongst us, even from the beginning
to

to this day; and therefore whosoever have or shall be guilty of passing judgment, and giving forth Censures under the notion of Church-censures, against Persons conscientiously refusing to put such Advice and Instructions in practice, or otherwise endeavour to wound such in their reputations, as men as well as Christians; this we testifie is not, neither can be any otherwise than the Fruit of a persecuting, imposing, self-seeking Spirit wherever it hath or shall appear; and therefore even from the Head to the Tail, we do abhor, and utterly deny it, as that from which the Lord hath set us free: And now forasmuch as the Lord according to measure, hath made us a free People, through the attaining of which in days past, we have neither feared the Threats nor Flatteries of Man, but have some time stood in the gap with a Testimony for the Liberty we have received in Christ Jesus: We therefore tell you, wherever you find any thing that hath a contrary tendency, and would usurp a power over Conscience, which is Christ's Prerogative, and who alone hath a peculiar authority over Conscience; our Souls do in the highest degree abominate it, and do surge against it; that at this time we could do no less for the clearing of our selves, and in the behalf of our Brethren, but signifie thus unto you, and deal thus plainly with you: For this was the testimony that remained as an obligation upon our Spirits to give in amongst you in answer to part of your Paper, and that false judgment therein contained, not having in our Eye to boast above our line of another mans enjoyment, but according to the understanding given us of God, have we cleared our selves, still having a great regard to love our Neighbours, and to do unto others as we would be done by; and that Truth and Righteousness may be promoted and exalted by us both in our Towns, Countreys and Families, vvhich vve are assured God requires at our hands; and unto him, even the Judge of Judges, both you and vve must give account, in vvhich day of Account no false pretence nor fair shew vwill serve turn, neither vwill building the Tombs of the Prophets, and garnishing the Sepulchres of the Righteous, and making a great noise through the Nation in a self exalted Spirit about Government, under the notion of Church-government, Orders, and such like, (the Rock on vvhich many of the professors of Christianity have solit) stand in any stead, but every man and every woman that truly fears God, and vvorks Righteousness, shall be accepted of him.

We do desire no worse for you, nor concerning you, but that you might be brought out of all Unchristian-like practices, and every thing that is the Fruit of Turbulent Minds and Spirits into the peaceable

able Truth, there to sit down with us, wherein we know true rest, and in which we remain your Friends,

Nathaniel Coleman Francis Brown. John Matravers.
Arthur Esmead. Richard Wear. John Jennings.

Forasmuch as it is in our Hearts to give in our testimony against the Paper given forth against *J. S.* and *J. W.* we do by these few lines signify unto those, who gave forth the said Paper, and others who own the same; that we disown the same, and a Testimony lives in our Hearts for our Brethren *J. W.* and *J. S.* yet as they have laboured amongst us in the Gospel of Christ in Faithfulness to our refreshment, so do we believe they have not changed their way, but do continue faithful in their Labour and Travel of the Gospel, to the refreshing the hearts of many who retain their first Love to the truth; we also desire that above written Paper given forth by some of our Friends, on whose Spirits it was to write more largely than we have done, may in the Spirit of Truth, which is void of prejudice, be read; and we doubt not, but that it will then have an Answer in the Hearts of such, even as it hath in ours.

Rob. Marshman.	W. Arch.	Ja. Neate.	John Fry, Jun.
Tho. Hulbert.	Jos. Jones.	W. Dier, Jun.	Tho. Frowde.
John Gibbons.	J. Neate.	Rob. Arch.	Rich. Fox.
Ed. Pyat.	Rob. Starr.	W. Hulbert.	James Carr.
J. Hand.	Edw. Starr.	R. Palmer, Jun.	John Foot.
Tho. Currice.	W. Woolley.	Hen. Ferris.	John Wiltshire.
W. Dyer, Sen.	John Sealey.	Rich. Puckeridge.	Jos. Serjeant.
Tho. Crab, Sen.	Hen. Rogers.	John Swaine.	Fran. Royley.
J. Jones.	John Rogers.	Tho. Coleman.	Ed. Star, Jun.
Nich. Edwards.	Ben. Lawrence.	John Wheeler.	W. Barnes.
Mart. Derrington.	W. Chandler.	John Strokes.	Ja. Matravers.
R. Palmer Sen.	J. Gaven, Sen.	Jasp. Wheeler.	Jeffery Gaven.
W. Jones, Sen.	J. Fry, Sen.	Ben. Power.	W. Bishop.
J. Starr.	W. Jones, Jun.	Tho. Crab, Jun.	Jos. Gaven.
H. Rennols.	Tho. Steade.	Eze. Wallis.	John Gaven, Jun.
			Daniel Sealy.

FINIS.

